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Farmville, Virginia



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THE FOCUS

VOL. IV

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NO. 3

Spring

Eva A. Orr.

PRING! I heard the magic word
Hurled from each tiny-throated bird on wing;
And the slender grasses lifted sleepy heads
And dreamily whispered, Spring.

Spring! I saw it in the friendly road,
I heard the little brook murmuring sing;
I looked and saw that everything
Breathed and dreamed of Spring.

Spring! Each little fleecy cloud
That scurried o'er the wide expanse of blue
Awoke vague longings in my heart
That murmured springtime, too.

The Origin of April Fool's Day

G. M. W.

HE ORIGIN of the custom of April-fooling cannot be traced with any degree of certainty. We only know that from time immemorial, people have fooled and been fooled so many times and in so many different ways that it seems as if the gods themselves delight in our chagrin and banish all our suspicions on that day so we may be duped the easier.

In the literature of the last century there are found many references to the origin of April Fool's Day. One suggestion is that the custom of playing tricks on the first day of April was derived from some ancient pagan custom such as the Huli festival among the Hindoos or the Roman Feast of Fools. One fact, however, we do know, and that is that the custom prevails in many countries under various names, which would seem to indicate that it comes to us from the earliest history of the race.

We cannot hope to change this custom, for if men have been fools from the beginning of time up to the present date, who are we to decide the fate of all posterity and declare that they shall not be fools also? With the prevailing custom of ages against us how would we dare to attempt such a thing—to attempt that which would undoubtedly end so disastrously and bring all our efforts to naught? And then, are we ashamed to confess that, when we have suffered those most severe of all pangs, do we object—I say seriously, object—to others being fooled? It atones, in a way, for the heart-rending pangs which we have undergone; it soothes our ruffled feelings to know that someone else shares our misery. We cannot be blamed for this. It is the inevitable.

Though some of you may receive much pleasure from your application of the meaning of April Fool's Day, you do so in ignorance of the real origin or source of your delight. While playing on the shore of a beautiful, limpid

stream, which is doing its sparkling best to relieve the monotony of the hours unoccupied by study, do you consider the source of the stream? Do you think of the mountains it rushes down, of the valleys it flows through, of the obstacles it mounts—just for you? No, I dare say you don't, and thus it becomes my duty to give you the necessary information concerning the origin of April Fool's Day. Some authorities have gone so far as to state that it originated with Noah, when he sent the dove on a fool's errand. Do not be so hasty as to judge Noah harshly, however; there are still other suppositions, and as we all are, I am sure, inclined to be merciful, we will not prosecute one whom we do not know positively to be guilty. We cannot rely on circumstantial evidence in discussing such a serious question.

It has been stated, though whether or not by Noah's attorneys in his defense I will not pretend to say (because I frankly confess that I do not know), that all the censure we have a mind to bestow belongs to France. It is given by reliable authority that France, in 1564, changed New Year's Day, which had been, up to that time, on the first of April, to the first of January, leaving this unfortunate space of twenty-four hours as destitute of anything but a mockery of its former festivities as books are of students in vacation. So you see, with all her splendor thus taken from her it is no more than right that the first day of April should receive a share of the pity which we bestow so freely upon ourselves, and that she should get revenge, so far as she is able, for the robbery of her joys and festivals.

Now, having described to you all about the origin of this popular day, and pointed out to you that you are not the only deservers of sympathy, I will give you all the consolation in my power, and in the days to come, when you hear the familiar words "April Fool" and feel 'way down deep that they are meant for you, remember, oh, for the solace of your aching heart, remember that a great man hath said, "Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die."

Let Me Forget

Mary Davis

OH, OH, OH! Why must I always be looked up to. I'm sure I'm not so imposing that people can never let me forget it," sobbed the brilliant young teacher of English Literature at Miss Chillingworth's Select School for Young Ladies. "Every day of my life I have to be so charming and witty; why, I have to live up to three diplomas and five medals won in my educational career," she scornfully cried as she buried her tear-stained face in her arm. "If there was only one who could forget, but they think I like it. They think I only want admiration and praise. I believe I would just love for some one to shake me and call me a 'senseless idiot.' Oh, I suppose I am an idiot not to be satisfied, but I'm lonesome—just plain lonesome," and again she sobbed. "This will never do. What would the girls think if they should see me, the condescending Miss Milton, crying my eyes out because I have to be a learned teacher instead of a jolly, fun-loving girl? I acknowledge I envy them, but I'm only twenty-three years old and have been a teacher for two horrible years. I can't be dignified, I won't. I think every one should be natural. Crying won't do any good," she moaned.

"Why can't I cheer up! I haven't been so blue since I've had my last diploma," and she laughed as if it were a joke. Now my dear Maisie," she continued, "you must go back into your shell until June for I am going to be very busy." With these parting words Miss Milton put on her hat, carefully pursed her lips into her usual smile; then murmured as she left her class room, "Oh that I might forget."

Could she be the same person who had cried so bitterly a month ago because she couldn't have fun? Miss Milton rubbed her eyes as she thought of the past few weeks. Helen Donaldson had asked her to spend her vacation

up in the country home of the Donaldson's. She had known that there would be many brilliant guests at this hospitable old farmhouse while she would be there but had finally accepted. How different it had been from her expectations. Actually she and Helen had played tennis, gone boating, picnicking, and in fact had had a perfectly splendid time. Dr. Jack Donaldson, Helen's brother, had gone with them always, helping and entertaining them with funny experiences and jokes. Now this evening was perfect for a hammock and novel. Miss Milton leaned back and closed her eyes. She must have gone to sleep for she was awakened from a dreadful dream—she was eighty years old, her voice high and cracked, and worst of all she was yellow, wrinkled, and gray haired.

"Wake up!" called a merry voice. "See what I have for you!"

Opening her eyes, Maisie looked into the mischievous brown ones of Dr. Jack.

"Do you like peaches?" he inquired. "Here are some I've brought you," and he dropped two in her lap. Then he seated himself on a pillow at her feet.

"Thank you so much," exclaimed Maisie, "you woke me from a horrible dream. Aren't they good?"

Jack looked up at her keenly. "Somehow you don't act like other school girls. I don't understand it. You seem afraid of something. What is it? I knew it must be something," he added, as she started.

"Let me forget! Oh, let me forget!" she begged entreatingly.

"But what? I don't understand, Miss Maisie. What is the matter?"

"Hasn't Helen told you? I'm no school girl. I'm—" and her voice dropped to a whisper, "a teacher of English Literature." Then hiding her face in a pillow she pleaded, "I can't help it, I was precocious and father made a teacher of me. Please forget it. I hate for people to think of me only as a teacher of English."

"Good gracious! as smart as that and ashamed of it. A case of nerves I expect," he muttered to himself. Then

he said aloud, "Forget it? That's not very easy, but Miss Maisie, you're foolish—a brilliant teacher and ashamed of it. Don't be sensitive about your accomplishments. But Miss Milton—Maisie, you don't have to be a teacher of English—won't you be a doctor's wife instead?" and he was in the hammock with her.

"Oh, that will be glorious, Jack; now I can forget—and I won't be a teacher of English Literature when I'm eighty years old!"

A Coon Hunt

Roselia Vaughan

GIMME dat chir, Mandy, yon come de little Marse fer ter hear a story. Has I got time fer ter tell you a story? Dat I has. Yes, I will tell you 'bout de coons. W'en dis ol' critter here 'fore you now was a youngster, dar was more coons on dat yonder creek den is in de whole creation now. Ol' Tom, what lives en dat hut on t'other side of de far field, was a nat'r'al born coon dog. No, honey, I ain't mean a real dog, des dat he could hunt coons des lak a dog. Ol' Missus done been scared 'bout her chillen all her life, an' in dem days dey wan't allowed to put their heads out de door after dark. Marse John, he wan't scared of nothin'. He heard me and Tom say as we was gwine huntin' dat night. 'Long 'bout dark Marse John began ya'nin' an' rubbin' his eyes. He know dat was de way ter make Missus tell 'im ter go ter bed, and dat what he want. Missus tell ol' Massa she reckon John be sick fer he ain't gen'rally sleepy nigh that time, but ol' Massa say he des tired from so much play. Me and Tom wuz des snickering under de po'ch, fer we know what Marse John up ter. 'Long 'bout eight 'clock, a'ter ol' Massa an' Missus had done gone in de house, me an' Tom crep' 'round ter Marse John's win'ow an' shook de blin's. Marse John was standin' dar ready to go. Cou'd he dress hisself? Dat he cou'd. He were a sharp boy, he were. He open' de blin's right e'sy and jump out. Den we put de blin's mos' together so nobody cou'd tell they was open. We crep' des as e'sy as mice out de yard, an' den run fer 'bout a half a mile, whar we had ol' Jack, de dog, tied. We turned de dog loose an' made fer de place whar we done seed de coon tra'ks. He sniff 'round a while, we sickin' 'im on all de time. Directly he gave a howl, an' off he sot, we right 'hin' him. We run an' run 'til we was mos' brok' down. 'Bout dis time de coon

run in a hole. 'Twan't nothin' to do now but strike another. Dat Jack did in mighty short order. 'Twan't long 'fore dat coon was treed. We didn't have no ax, so let 'im stay dar. Marse John had done fall down so much and done got so many briars stuck in 'im that he was tired, so we 'cided ter go home. 'Bout de time we got ter de mellon patch we was mighty thirsty. Nothin' ter do but stop an' eat a mellon (folks knowed how to raise mellons dem days). De seeds was as black as I is, an' de meat was as red as blood. Ol' Massa was mighty proud of dat mellon patch, an' mos' every night he walked out dar ter see dat nobody was botherin' 'em. We had des broke de mellon an' ready to eat de nice red heart when we see sump'n' movin' 'cross de field toward us. We was too scar'd to move. De sump'n' stopped by a bush an' broke a piece. Den we knowed 'twas ol' Massa. We knowed 'twan't no use fer to run fer ol' Massa could run too. We ain't said nary word, an' ol' Massa ain't said nary word. He caught hold of Marse John, an' he set down on a stump, an' laid Marse John on his lap. Me and Tom was shakin' lak we was cold. Dat was a awful dose he gived Marse John. He hollered loud 'nough ter wake up de dead. Ol' Massa sot Marse John down and took Tom nex', den he took me. I don't never fergot dat beatin' yet. Af'er he done beat us all he spoke fer de fus time; he says to Tom an' me, 'Go home, an' never let me catch you en my mellon patch ag'in.' He took Marse John by de han' and pulled him on wid him. Did I go ag'in? 'Deed I didn't, but Marse John went huntin' some mo'. No, I ain't got time ter tell no mo' terday. G' long now."

April Weather

G. M. W.

WHEN April's tricky showers fall,
Tho all had promised fair,
When clouds come o'er the sky of blue
And hover in the air,

Just keep your life with sunshine filled,
Your heart light as a feather;
For after showers come the flowers—
Besides—it's April weather.

When life's blue skies are clouded o'er
With troubles dark, foretelling
Showers of tears to follow soon
Just use this for their quelling:

The clouds and rain and sunshine, all
Come hand in hand together,
And if through showers we look for flowers
We'll love the April weather.

Compulsory Education in Virginia

Olivia Compton

IN a recent debate, the resolution was "Compulsory education should follow child labor laws." Why was the resolution worded in that way? If compulsory education laws were enforced child labor would be practically abolished for nine months in the year, for a child cannot be in school and in the factory at the same time.

That the child needs an education is acknowledged by all adults, but few children realize the need and go to school of their own accord. Since many parents are too indulgent to require their children to attend school when they do not want to go, the compulsion must come from outside of the family, and only the state can provide it.

It has been said that many families cannot buy the books and the extra clothes necessary for attendance at school. But as long as people stay ignorant they will never be able to buy books and clothes. The child of the present day can better afford to wear to school the same ragged and patched clothes that he wears at home than to lead an inefficient life after he is too old to go to school. The state furnishes books to such children as need them and if this looks too much like making a pauper of the child, the state can better afford to lend books to all children—as many states do now—and pay pensions to widows and disabled men than to have a large part of its population grow up in ignorance.

The argument has been advanced that the schools are not suited to the masses and the children would better be serving an apprenticeship. Even as the schools are now the children gain a broader view of life and its requirements than they do in a workshop, where they come in contact with coarse men. But the wisdom of the argument has been appreciated and much has been done and more is being done to adapt the schools to all classes. The tendency is toward practical work in the schools, but the

best-equipped buildings and most carefully thought-out plans are useless when the children are playing in the streets. Besides the child needs the broadening influence of school life before he decides what he wants to do and should acquire an education before he starts his apprenticeship. A child of ten or twelve years does not usually know what he wants to do, and his parents should not choose his life work for him. Many an artist would have been lost to the world if his natural inclination had not been far superior to his father's will. But what can become of the boy whose natural inclination is not strong enough to overcome all obstacles? Must he be a bad blacksmith when he might be a good merchant just because his father wanted him to be a blacksmith?

Some say the country is not ready for it. Neither was it ready for self-government when the Declaration of Independence was signed; but the crisis brought strong men forward to help the country through the struggle. In like manner the country will be prepared for compulsory education as soon as the citizens care enough to work and vote for it. It will never be ready for it if we sit back with folded hands and say that it might be a good thing but do nothing to prepare for it.

They tell us that the law will not be enforced. If public sentiment is aroused sufficiently to obtain the passage of the law, that same public sentiment will demand its enforcement. In other states the law is enforced. Are the men of Virginia so inferior to the men of other states that they cannot be trusted to enforce a law which they have voted for?

The strongest argument against it is that there are not sufficient schools and teachers for the other race in our midst. But in some counties there are not so many negroes and there are enough schools for them.

With the law which now exists in the state, the counties which can do so should pass compulsory laws; then, as the negro teachers increase, the other counties can follow their example and, in the course of time, Virginia and other Southern states can have state-wide compulsory education laws, just as many Northern and Western states have now.

Lines

G. M. W.

HE WHISPERED MELODY of the wind;
The brooklet's undertone;
The warbling robin's happy notes;
The glory of the sun;
The care-free laughter of the child,
Caught in the wavelet's play;
The twinkling of the merry stars
By night, and blue of sky by day;
The peaceful stillness of the hills,
The valley's restful scene,
Of quiet lakes and rippling streams,
And meadows softly green—
All put to shame our hurried pace
That leads us swiftly on,
Unhearing in this world of song
The music sent from heaven,
Unseeing in this world of light
These blessings God has given.

The Legend of the Willow

Julia Price

ONCE UPON A TIME, long, long ago when the world was young, and the nymphs took care of all Nature, there lived a little naiad, whose duty it was to take care of the rivers and brooks and springs.

This little naiad was very beautiful. Her hair was like the shadows in the pools, her eyes were like the dark blue of a summer night, and her dress, always the same, was like the blue of the sea.

Always it was her duty to take care of the flowing water. She must wander over the world and when she saw sticks and stones blocking the way of some brook or river, she must take them away, so that the streams would not be hindered in making their journeys to the sea.

As the little naiad wandered over the world, doing her duty, she saw one day a beautiful willow tree. It was tall and straight, and its long branches were covered with fine, feathery little leaves. It grew far out over the bank of a swift little mountain stream that was always getting choked up with sticks. As the little naiad worked, freeing the stream, the soft breeze made the little leaves whisper together. At last she discovered that the beautiful tree was whispering to her.

"Stay, oh, stay here always, beautiful little naiad! In the warm summer days you may sit in my shade and I will bring breezes to cool you, and when the days grow cold I will give you all my leaves to make your dress warmer.

"Ah!" said the little naiad, "would that I could stay here always, but I have my duties to perform. I can not stay, but I will come back to you often." Then she went sorrowfully away, for she loved the beautiful, tall, strong willow.

Many times the little naiad came back, and many times they were happy together, the little green leaves whisper-

ing to her while she worked with the stream, but at last there came a change. One day, the little naiad came back very slowly and sorrowfully. She told the beautiful tree that this would be the last time they would ever see each other, for a god had fallen in love with her, because of her beauty, and wished to marry her, and the wishes of the gods were not to be disregarded.

They talked together for the last time, long and very sadly, then the little naiad had to go on over the world, bidding farewell to her brooks and rivers and springs. As she slipped away, she kissed the ends of the branches, and whispered to the willow, "Farewell, my beautiful tree, although I can never return, remember that I shall be faithful always!"

The big willow tree, which had stood so fine and straight, began to droop its head, and, gradually, all of its light, feathery leaves turned toward the water where they had seen the little naiad working. Always the beautiful willow tree grieved for the lovely little naiad, who could never come back, and to this day the willow trees lean far out over the water, and their branches droop down to its edge, where the little naiad once worked so happily.

The Joke

Martha Lee

DAN had advertised for a wife. He was tired of being a young bachelor, but he could not find a girl who suited his fancy, so as a last resort he had put his plea in the paper, and received a letter in which the picture of a very lovely girl was enclosed.

The letter itself was long-drawn-out and explained the life history of the girl whose picture it contained. The letter showed that her life had not been a very happy one. At nineteen she had become infatuated with the stage, and decided to be an actress, so for five years she had worked hard to gain a place among the star actresses but had not succeeded, and being disgusted with life in general, she thought that Dan's advertisement offered a great opportunity to secure happiness, and if he had no very serious objection he would reply immediately and she would arrange to meet him as soon as possible.

Dan studied the face of the picture for a long time, and then decided to take the step of risking his future with such a beautiful girl. He replied at once to her letter, asking her to make arrangements to meet him at F—— at the earliest date possible.

Preparations were quickly made, and the date and time for meeting at F—— were set. He was to wear a red rose and she a white one. Dan, who naturally was very much excited over meeting his future bride, was at the train an hour ahead of time, pacing the platform with a red rose thrust through his button-hole.

When the train pulled up and a woman of considerable size, who was dressed in blue with a white rose pinned on, stepped to the platform, he was very surprised, and started to run, but she had seen the red rose and had gently taken his arm before he had time to realize what was happening. He tried to persuade her that his advertisement and letters were all a joke, but she informed him that the joke was not

on her, because she had been able to secure a perfectly good, wealthy husband by means of the advertisement, so he, realizing that there was no way out of it, escorted her to the hotel. He left her there, and turned homeward to try to puzzle out the situation into which he had carelessly gotten himself, but finding he could not do so, he decided to return to the hotel and have an interview with the lady who had so suddenly come into his life.

He was ushered into her sitting room, and was dumfounded to see his friend Dick Adams sitting quietly in the chair, dressed as the woman he had expected to see. A light wig and blue hat were lying on a table near by.

Dan realized then that the joke was on him, and decided never to try for a wife in that manner again.

A Little Hero

Lemma Garrett

“**D**ARSE CHARLES, as I wuz cummin’ on from de office suh, Marse Carter he don’ told me as how he had hearn dat dem darn Yankees wuz cummin’ and how dey wuz takin’ everything they could git thar paws on along wid ’em, and leavin’ a torch under the rest, and Marse Hiram suh, he ’lowed as dey would git here ’bout tomorrow as dey is camping down at the Court House tonight.” This was the news old Uncle Wilshire, the gardener, brought the small family as they waited anxiously for some details of the advance of the Northern army.

“Oh, Charles, do you think they will burn our home and take my horses? Will they, Charles?”

“I don’t know, Puss, it depends on whether they will turn to the right or the left up at the forks. If they come by here I suppose they will treat us as they have the others on their route.”

“Father, they shan’t have Rob, shall they?” was the alarmed question of Willie, his little boy of twelve years. I hope not, son, for your sake, but if they do you will just have to be a little man and stand it and when the war is over father will give you another to take Rob’s place.”

“I don’t want another in Rob’s place. I just want Rob,” sobbed Willie.

“There, there, son, don’t cry, maybe a wiser Providence will save Rob for you.”

“I tell you, father,” said Willie, after a while, a smile brightening up his face, “me an’ Jim’s going to take Rob down into the pines tomorrow mornin’ and keep him until the Yankees pass.”

“No, no, Willie, the Yankees might find you and take Rob and you both away with them, and what would father do without his little man?”

"Scuse me, Marse Charles," said Uncle Wilshire, who had lingered around during this discussion, "but why don't you let dat 'ar nigger Beverly, de carriage driver, suh, take Rob and de Missus' bays down into the swamp at the south side of the mill, suh, and keep dem until 'em debils git by."

"That certainly wouldn't do any harm, Wilshire. Go tell Beverly to come to me."

"But, father, I'm afraid Beverly won't take good care of Rob. He might let the Yankees get him."

"No, son, Beverly is a good trusty negro, he will not let them have your pony."

"Evenin', Marse Charles. What can I do for you, suh?" said the good-natured negro, Beverly.

"Beverly, I want you to take your mistress' carriage horses and Rob down into the swamp at the south side of the mill and keep them until the Northern army passes."

"Lordy, Marse Charles, suh, I sho' is glad. When I hearn 'em niggers down to the stable talk about as how 'em Yanks wuz a-comin' tomorrow I jis' wondered what 'ud come of my Missus' pretty bays whar I done kept so nice. Dat I will do it, suh. 'Twould have broke my heart to see 'em go, suh."

"And you won't let them have Rob either, Uncle Beverly?" queried Willie.

"Dat I won't, little Marster, dat I won't," replied the negro with a ceremonious bow to the boy.

"Take enough provisions to last you about three days. You had better not come back until the last of the week, Beverly."

"I do dat, yassah, yassah. Good-bye Marster; good-bye, little Marster."

Willie was perfectly satisfied when he saw Uncle Beverly take the horses and his pony to the swamp and he went to bed happy, for he thought if the Northerners got everything else, his beautiful pet, his only comrade, the fat little black pony with white face and hoofs, would still be his. Thinking all this he went to sleep, not knowing what the morrow would bring forth.

The next day Willie's father could not bring himself to leave the house the whole day, and he was reading when Willie rushed in, exclaiming, "Father, the Yankees are coming. They are over on Harper's Hill now. But they won't get Rob, will they, father?"

"No, son, Beverly has Rob safe and sound down in the swamp." "Puss, did you hear Willie say that the army was coming?" he asked of his wife as she came in.

"No, oh, Charles!" she answered, with a sob in her throat.

"Puss, we must be brave and remember that God doeth all things well."

Willie, who had gone back to watch the advance of the men with the assurance that his pony was safe, called out that they were coming up the road to the house and that one man was riding in front of all the rest.

"I must go out to meet them. Be brave, Puss, and perhaps they will be—"

"Good morning, sir, what can I do for you?" he asked of the soldier in blue.

"I have ordered this place searched for provisions, money, and anything that is valuable. You see, sir, as well as I do, that resistance would be utterly absurd."

"Yes," answered Willie's father as he bent down to catch the whisper of his little son who had slipped his hand into that of his father when the soldier turned around to give the orders for the search to his men.

"Yes, Rob is safe, at least I hope so, but hush, son, they might suspect something."

The search continued until everything in the way of silverware, provisions and provender was taken. The soldiers had packed everything and were ready to start. The little family had gathered on the porch to see the army off.

"Well, Puss, we will have to work your horses on the farm this year, since we haven't any more," was the remark the father made to his little family.

"You can work Rob, too, father," said Willie.

Just then a long whinny was heard, and Willie whirling around, saw his pony, Bob, held by one of the soldiers,

being for the first time lashed by another soldier, who was trying to drive him along.

With a wild scream of horror, the boy ran into the house, but he reappeared in a moment with his little rifle. His only thought was to save his loved pet. Rushing out among the soldiers he pointed the rifle straight at the man's head, saying, "If you cut him another time I will shoot your head right off."

The soldier, astonished and cowed at the boy's bravery, fell back behind the men who had gathered around the scene, eager to see what the result would be.

"Where did you get my pony?" asked Willie, of the soldier who held him.

"A nigger gave him to us, with a pair of bays, just a little while ago, on condition that he might go along with us," answered the man.

"Well, you can't have my pony anyway."

"What are you going to do if I take it anyhow?" asked the soldier.

"I will show you," answered the little fellow, raising his rifle again threateningly. When the soldier started to lead the pony off he heard the sharp command, "Stop," and, looking up, he saw the stern, angry face of the lieutenant.

"But, lieutenant, er—er—."

"That's all right," broke in the lieutenant. "Give the boy his pony." Then turning to the boy, he took his hand, saying, "God bless you, little man. I wish every man was as brave as you have proven yourself to be this afternoon. Good-bye."

He and the soldiers marched away leaving Willie happy with his arms around Rob's neck.

Together

Margaret Porter

TOGETHER when the Spring of Love is glowing,
When hearts beat light and gay and all in tune;
Together when the gentle winds are blowing,
And earth is fair beneath the silver moon;
Together, you and I, through rosy hours
That glide amid the melody of June.

Together 'mid the fullness of the summer,
When love has poured its fragrance on the air
Like full-blown roses when the bee, gay hummer,
Is bearing all their sweetness to his lair;
Together, you and I, with hearts united
In love's full glory sweet as incense rare.

Together when the melody grows deeper
To the full chords of Autumn's ripened years,
And still the wondrous goodness of our Keeper
Draws us but closer as the darkness nears;
Together, you and I, with love grown richer
For all life's beauty, and for all its tears.

Together when the trembling music hushes
Into a silence sweeter than all sound;
Together when the fading daylight blushes
And Winter's snows are drifting o'er the ground;
Together, you and I, we'll face the sunset
With love's undaunted faith and glory crowned.

The Burglar and the Broken Engagement

Ruth Davis

IAST THURSDAY night I, like "Abou Ben Adhim," was awakened from a deep dream of peace, but unlike him, it was not an angel that did the awakening. It was the voices of Alice and Jack in the parlor across the hall. I had sat down after supper to read a new magazine story and had dropped off to sleep, lulled by the murmur of their voices. Now that the murmur had changed to crisp and louder tones no wonder I had been brought to consciousness.

"Good-night," were the first words I distinguished from Alice.

"But Alice—" began Jack's voice imploringly.

"Good night," and the door was slammed, I guessed, in Jack's face.

In a moment Alice, looking exhausted, stood in my door. "Hello, Mumsey," she said with forced cheerfulness. "I am so glad you are up. Won't you help me pack my trunk tonight? I am going to visit Aunt Margaret in the morning."

"Why, what in the world are you thinking about, Alice? It's eleven o'clock at night! Why don't you wait until tomorrow or the next day?"

"Aunt Margaret asked me to visit her and get some strawberries and if I wait too long they will all be gone."

"Well, strawberries have to bloom before they get ripe, and if this cold weather keeps up they will never even do that," I said, rather crossly, I am afraid, for I was vexed with her for not being frank with me.

Alice laughed. "Mumsey," she said, "you *know* why I am going away. I won't marry Jack. He is the hate-
fulest creature you ever saw. I can't tell even you what he said but I told him that I was going away, and I am."

"Very well," I said, but I hated to see her go and my mind was already busy thinking of ways to patch up her

broken engagement with Jack. He and Alice were made for each other, but they both have quick tempers and occasionally use them.

We hurried upstairs and began to pack. It took us some time so it was nearly twelve o'clock when I kissed Alice and started to my room. As I stepped into the hall there came an unmistakable crash from below. Alice heard it too and caught my arm.

"What is it, Mumsey? It can't be a burglar, and father away!"

I stood trembling with cold and fright. My husband and son, Tom, were both away. Alice and I were alone but for our old black cook, Martha, whom no earthly power could awaken before six o'clock in the morning."

"Merciful heavens! I can hear him moving around in the parlor," whispered Alice, clutching my arm so tightly that the next morning it was all black and blue.

"Wait a minute, dear," I said, wrenching myself away from her with a great effort. "I am going to get your father's pistol."

"I found it in a moment though it was difficult in the dark with Alice holding to my skirt. I crept to the stair and peeped over the railing. There was a man plainly outlined between us and the window. I pointed that pistol straight at him and pulled the trigger—but—nothing happened! (Tom told me afterwards that it ought to have been cocked, but that didn't help me then.)

I was scared to death, but I knew that something must be done to protect Alice and Martha and myself from that awful burglar. I drew back my arm and threw the pistol straight at his head! There was a report, a crash, and then Alice turned on the light! There, lying on the floor, was Jack!

Alice screamed, "You have killed him!" and flew down the stairs only to faint when she saw the cut on his forehead where the pistol had struck him.

I am a stout woman and opposed to rapid motion on general principles, but I went down there in a hurry. Perhaps my weight increased my speed. I snatched a

flower vase from the table and poured half of the water in her face and half in his. In a moment both of them opened their eyes and sat up. Alice struggled to her knees beside Jack, and begged him to forgive her. He stared at her an instant and then began to beg her to forgive him.

I didn't know what they were talking about so I went to get some bandages and a bowl of water. When I got back they were sitting on the floor holding hands and planning a June wedding.

While I was bandaging Jack's head, he explained to me that he had forgotten his overcoat and hat in his hurried exit and had paced up and down, thinking, until he got so cold that he thought of the long way to his home. We never lock doors in the country so he thought that he could slip in and get them without arousing me or Alice. The trouble was that Alice always gave him his coat and hat so he didn't know where to find them.

Well, they have made up and they are so happy that I can't help feeling glad. Still I don't think my husband ought to tease me all the time about being so brave as to fight burglars by throwing at them.

The Autobiography of a Gold Ring

Elise M. Bradley

DY HOME was once in the mines of California, and no doubt you will wonder how I came to be in Virginia. If you will listen I will tell you.

One day, as I was quietly sleeping in my cozy bed, I was suddenly awakened by a jar, and found myself in the hands of a good-looking young man. It annoyed me to have my rest disturbed, but nevertheless, I knew I might as well become reconciled, and finally I began to wonder what the man was going to do with me. I found out sooner than I thought, for that afternoon he took the train for Virginia with me tucked safely away in his pocket, where I couldn't see my childhood companions to tell them good-bye. I cried for a long time, but the good-looking man didn't seem to notice it at all.

When we reached Virginia I was taken out of the dark pocket and handed over to another man, who turned me over and over and then rubbed me so hard that I looked really beautiful. I began to feel proud of myself and to be glad the good-looking young man had found me. Finally, I was twisted and beaten into a hollow circle and a large, sparkling stone was put on my back, and I began to feel more proud than ever, and even forgot all the pain I had suffered. The man called me a "diamond ring" and I thought it was a beautiful name.

One night the good-looking young man went to see a young lady and left me with her. I was very glad of this because she looked as if she would treat me well—and she did.

But one night the good-looking young man came again, and somehow they got very angry and quarreled. Then the beautiful girl drew me off of her finger to give me back, but I was determined not to go, so I jumped out of her hand and fell on the floor. They both stooped down to pick me

up, and their hands met. I hardly remember what happened next, but somehow I was slipped back on her finger, much to my joy, and got almost as many kisses as she did.

She has been better than ever to me since that time, and now beside me is my husband, a band ring, whom I married a few weeks after the quarrel, and I expect to live happily forever.

Nature

Eva A. Orr



WATCHED a tiny budding flower
Unfold, with its colors rare;
I looked deep down in its tiny heart
And I found God hidden there.

I looked deep down in the heart of a rose,
A rose most wonderfully fair;
I plucked each crimson petal apart
And behold, God was there.

I looked deep down in the eyes of a child,
Whose depths were untroubled by care;
I held him close, close to my heart,
For I knew that God was there.

Mr. Bear's Adventure

Kate Gray

“**D**ADDY, tell me a new story tonight. I don’t want to hear about Br’er Rabbit and Br’er Fox,” said little Sallie, as she climbed on her father’s knee.

“What kind of a story do you want now? Want one about Mr. Bear?”

“Oh, tell me about Mr. Bear. What did he do, Daddy?”

“Well, you know Mr. Bear is powerful fond of sleeping, and he crawls in his den and goes to sleep and there he stays for weeks and weeks without anything to eat or any water to drink, and when he wakes up he is always so very hungry. Mr. Bear had been in his den now for a long time and one beautiful morning the birds and rabbits and everything made such a noise that they woke him up with all their songs and good times. This didn’t please Mr. Bear, but he couldn’t go to sleep again so he crawled out and began rubbing his eyes and stretching and yawning, and he was so hungry he didn’t know what to do.

Then old Mr. Bear went down to the spring and got a nice cool drink of water and began to look about him for something to eat. He was really looking for a bee-tree, for you know Mr. Bear is very fond of honey and he robs every bee-tree he can find. But he didn’t see any bees in sight this morning and had to go further on in his search. Not very far off he came to some nice grass and at once began to eat it, but it didn’t seem to agree with him. It got all twined around his teeth and under his lips so badly that he just had to look for something else until he should find his bee-tree, because he was very, very hungry.

“He wasn’t very far from Mr. Man’s place and he decided to go there and look around, for he knew Mr. Man always had something to eat and it would be all right to get it so long as he didn’t get caught. So he started out and pretty soon he came to a ground-pea patch. He thought

these must be mighty good for Mr. Man always raised them, and he just waded in, eating hulls and vines and all, and of course a lot of dirt for he didn't take time to knock it off of the peas. He nearly choked himself to death and stopped eating for a while and began clawing at his teeth and throat in a crazy kind of way and undoubtedly would have scratched all the skin off if he hadn't just at this time heard some bees buzzing near him. He stopped and began to watch them for he knew they were honey-bees and he thought he would follow them to their home. You see he was used to doing this; that is the way he always finds their honey. It wasn't long before he had found their hollow and he was still so hungry that he didn't stop to think, but just put in his claw and took out the comb and began eating it, when the bees lit all over his eyes, nose and ears and commenced to sting for they were mad with Mr. Bear. This wasn't the first time he had taken their honey and they didn't intend to give up without a fight. And fight they did, or so Mr. Bear thought, and he laid down and rolled over and over trying to get them off. Then, finding this didn't help, he jumped up and ran as fast as he could, and if he hasn't stopped he is running still."

"And he never did get that honey," Daddy added, as he looked down at the sleepy little girl in his arms.

Max

Ray Bailey

THIS WAS one of those long, hot, dusty, tiresome trips that salesmen are so often compelled to take, that I learned the story of "Max."

The train had gradually let off passengers, until there were few of us left in the smoker. We had been quiet for some time, smoking cigar after cigar until the car was filled with the blue smoke. The silence was unbroken until the little newsboy made his appearance and his shrill cry broke the spell which seemed to be cast over us. Then, when the boy had gone, Mr. Harding settled himself comfortably and began this story:

"I have always been interested in children—not the spoiled, pampered children of the rich, but the poor ones who have such a hard struggle to make both ends meet. One of the most pathetic cases I ever came across was that of 'Max.' I had just stepped off the train one afternoon in a small town, when a ragged little urchin came up to me and said, 'Lemme carry yo' baggage, Mister.' My bag was not heavy so I consented. I walked up to the hotel with him, for his appealing little face had struck me, and his timid, shrinking manner had interested me, as it is so unusual to see timidity in a street urchin. He was very, very shy, and answered my numerous questions in mono-syllables. He was very polite, however, and seemed very grateful when I put an extra coin in his hand. The next morning I happened to see him again, and I asked an old man, who was standing near me at the time, about him. He seemed surprised that anyone should be interested in Max, the village waif, but on seeing that I was in earnest he began, 'Why that is Jim MacFarland's boy. He is one of the ne'er-do-wells, and for all his disappointments he seems to blame the boy, Max. Why that little fellow has been whipped black and blue. None of the town authorities seem to be interested in the case, and Jim takes

advantage of their negligence. Why that boy never knows what it is to go home without being strapped. He gets very little to eat, hardly enough to keep life in him. As for clothes, he usually fishes them out of the dump heaps. His mother is dead, and the only thing that he had to lavish his love on was a little tan dog, which was killed a few weeks ago. Since then he seems to have become more shrunken and hopeless.'

"I determined to help the boy, but a telegram compelled me to leave town in a few hours. So, of course, I did not get an opportunity to do so. In after years, however, I went to the same town again, and all at once I thought about the boy. I found out on inquiring that the child had been run over by a car and his leg severed from his body. He was taken to the hospital and there amidst the white cots, and with the hand of the nurse in his, he had gone at last to the rest which was deprived him here. It has been my one regret that I did not help him, but I find some comfort in knowing that little Max is happy now."

Mr. Harding resumed his cigar, and once more we lapsed into unbroken silence—a tribute to little Max.

Sketches

NATURE'S WARDS

The little brook babbling down the hill hushed its glee-
ful tune on coming to the huge oak that spread its gnarled
old branches lovingly over the rippling water. Up among
the rustling leaves of the tree a small nest held three young
mocking birds. On their mother's leaving for food they
had been rocked by the gentle breeze and sung to by the
stream until now they slept peacefully. A black snake
emerged from the bank of the stream and coiled his way
stealthily up the tree. The brook, with a fluttering surface,
was dismayed. It saw the warm sun falling through the
leaves on the mottled skin of the snake, causing rays of
purple and green to rise like tiny clouds of colored vapor,
but it was not deceived by the beauty. When at last he
reached the nest the wind no longer rustled the leaves,
not a song was heard, and the stream was motionless but
for a few bubbles that sputtered a stubborn remonstrance
and then went out of existence. The snake reached his
head over the nest, small streams of fire gleaming from his
beady black eyes. The sleeping birds moved restlessly
as a shadow crossed the nest. Suddenly there was a rustling
of leaves from above, then a flapping of wings. A
large hawk stretched his talons for a little bird. In his
fear of being discovered he had not seen the snake. The
snake, thinking it the mother bird, wrapped his tail against
the tree and sprang to the hawk's feet. The huge bird
fluttered his wings in fright and rose with a scream into the
air, the snake coiling its body about that of the enemy.
The stream watched until they had disappeared in the blue
clouds above, then, leaping with joy, went on its way.

—*Temple Snelling.*

A CHAPEL TALK

Dr. Jarman—"Young ladies, we are very glad to have with us this morning, Dr. John Anderson Smith, superintendent of the public schools of Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Smith has been identified with the public school system of Cleveland for the past twenty-eight years. Dr. Smith will talk to you for a short while this morning and I am sure it will be well worth your while to listen."

Students—Applause.

Dr. Smith—"Well, young ladies, I suppose I am the most scared man in the state of Virginia. I can and have talked to one young lady at a time but I have never attempted to talk to seven hundred at once before.

"But it is an inspiration to me as I look out over this magnificent audience of select young ladies, gathered together for such a noble cause."

Students—Applause.

Dr. Smith—"I wonder if you realize what enormous opportunities for doing good you have before you.

"Young ladies, the future of Virginia rests with you and it is for you to decide whether or not it shall continue to come up to the standards that Washington and Jefferson have set for it. As each of you go out as teachers to different parts of this state it is within your power to mold the lives and characters of the boys and girls with whom you come in contact. And it is these boys and girls who are to be the future citizens of this state.

"Young ladies, I wish that I could find words that would express the praise I have for you for choosing such a noble profession, for I believe that there are few professions on earth above the one you have chosen. I will not keep you from your classes for I know that you're anxious to be there."

Students—Laugh.

Dr. Smith—"I shall not soon forget the deep impression that this beautiful audience had made upon me and a any time you wish to come to Cleveland in the capacity

of a teacher or otherwise (for I have five boys), I will be glad to extend to you a hearty welcome. Thank you."

Students—Applause.

—L. C. H.

A RESCUE

You were in the vacant lot behind the playground when the bell rang, lying under the big elm tree with your elbow resting on the new green grass and your head resting in your hand. You just couldn't go in so you shut your eyes and tried to forget it. A soft breeze blew your hair in your face and brought sounds of rustling leaves and bees and little birds and far-off tinkling cow bells. You didn't call them cow bells, though. They were the bells the fairy queens rang to call their courtiers together. You made up beautiful stories about them for, oh! a long time. Then you thought about where you were and you were scared. You were afraid of the teacher. She was a very pretty teacher, but she could be very stern and unsympathetic sometimes. You had seen her that way. You were miserable, so you hid your face and cried. Then a big, strong voice asked you what you were crying about and somehow you told the tall, broad-shouldered man everything. Then he took you back to school and you weren't afraid—much. The kind man told the teacher how it all was and nothing very awful happened, but you wondered vaguely why the teacher was all dimples.

M. M. M.

MY MAGIC CARPET

Every fall after the first heavy frost the fairies begin arraying the trees in holiday attire. They paint the dogwoods from deep orange to brightest crimson; the poplars and hickories rich yellow; the maples and black-gums bright red and yellow. Then the majestic oak is painted deep red brown to emphasize his superiority. All of these intermingling colors would look too modern for my ancient magic carpet so the fairies clean and polish the lofty old pines to subdue and richen the brighter hues of the other

trees. Now, indeed, the fairies have done their work well.

I gaze dreamily at the magic carpet through the thin blue haze of Indian summer and can imagine myself in a story from the Arabian Nights. The rich Persian colors are before me, the quiet languid feeling keeps me still and dreaming. So I sit hours gazing at my magic carpet, which carries me through the lands of Never-has-been, Never-was; and Never-will-be.

Mary Davis.

DAN'L'S MOTHER

"Dan'l planted that tree, and I never set and look at it 'thout I think of Dan'l.'" She was old and wrinkled and they say her mind had given away.

I had come to live just a few rods from where she lived with her widowed daughter and her name-sake grandchild.

I ran over one morning and she and I sat on the front porch. Everything was in perfect order around the yard, which rambled leisurely away from the house and ended with a sudden dip down to the gate. By the gate stood a large weeping-willow. Three or four times while I stayed she told me about Dan'l planting the tree. A woman joined us by and by, and hearing the old lady's words she spoke apologetically about Dan'l. During the story her mother sat with folded hands, gazing dreamily at the willow, and paying no attention at all to us.

There had been a large family of children; some had died in infancy; one had been burned in the old homestead; one had been accidentally shot; and the oldest of all, an engineer, who always whistled "Whip-poor-will" when he passed on his run, had been blown up when the boiler of his engine exploded in a wreck.

Her mother had accepted all these trials with trembling obedience to the will of her God, just bestowing the love that had been theirs on other people and on her remaining children, her heart-strings drawing closer and tighter around Dan'l all the while. Dan'l was delightfully beautiful as a child; lovable and clever as a boy; and the handsome, dashing comrade of everyone who knew him as a man. Nothing was complete without him, and his mother was

so happy in him that she too delighted and cheered those around her as she went about in her busy, bustling way. For years she gave herself up to this joy in her boy. Then one day Dan'l married. Nothing could have been better since it was Kate, who lived just across the road and with whom Dan'l had played all his life.

After a few years the rush to Oklahoma began. Dan'l must go. His mother could not go but he would soon become rich and return. With tear-dimmed eyes, she watched Dan'l and Kate go. Then she became pensive and silent and she seemed to think always of Dan'l and, since she was Dan'l's wife, of Kate. She came to expect them home every day, and dusk always found her sitting on the porch—waiting. As she sat there one day, a messenger boy dashed up with a yellow envelope. Dan'l's mother turned it over and over and then called her daughter to read the message, "Alice, come see what this says. Maybe they're coming."

Her daughter came and read the message, and when she turned her white, drawn face to her mother and said, "Yes, he is coming," Dan'l's mother knew.

She had lived on many years but she never talked except in a rambling, broken way, and then always about Dan'l.

As I walked down the rambling path to the gate and past the weeping willow that Dan'l had planted I looked at the pathetic figure of Dan'l's mother, her hands clasped, and her eyes, weary with watching, still gazing far off into the distance where Dan'l had gone and had left her alone.

Cassie Pace.

UNCLE JOE'S REMINISCENCE

On a low stool before the fire sat old Uncle Joe, a former slave in our family; and now as a white-haired old man, he proved to be a very mine of good stories.

One night late in December all of us children gathered around the kitchen fireplace to hear Uncle Joe tell a story.

Outside a blinding snow-storm was raging and the winds whistled around the house. It was a regular story-telling

night. When we had all got settled around the blazing fire, Uncle Joe launched forth on one of his numerous stories of the war.

"Well, chilluns, 'twuz in dem times w'en dis yer country wuz in a turrible stir: right after Marse Robert gin up his swo'd en us niggers wuz sot free. Dere come a ole nigger tho' dis yer country w'at wuz named Joshua, en he mak' 'tend lak he wuz from de Holy-lands. He said if we foller arter him we warn't nebber gwine'er hab ter work no mo'. En dis yer Joshua soon ez he git a congregassion tergedder he 'ud raise dem ter sech a pitch dey don' 'no' what dey do. And dis yer ole nigger didn't hab no better sense dan to fall in wid 'em.

"We wuz a gwine North whar Joshua sed we oughter be. I followed 'long fer a week o' mo'. I kep' er thinkin' uv Marse John and Missus en de chilluns, how de wuz a missin' me en how I wuz missin' dem, t'wel bimeby I got so I couldn't think o' nothin' else. Yo' gran'pa h'ed all'as been squar' wid dis nigger en I seed hit mor'en ebber w'en I wuz a layin' under a tree ub a cold night, nigh 'bout frez to death and ez hongry ez a bar.

"I wuz a feared ter let ole Joshua know how bad I wanted ter see Marse John, kez he would sho' thought I wuz one o' dem traitors w'at yer he'rn tell un enduring de war. But I warn't nuthing like dat—I jes' wan'ed ter see yer gran'pa, en yer gran'ma, en yer daddy, en yer aunts and uncles.

"Well, one day I seed a sight w'at made me want ter go back home mor'n ebber. Dere wuz a little curly-headed boy out a-playin' in a yard en one o' dese yer spirited hosses come a-runnin' from nowharz right at dis little boy what wuz de spittin' imag' ub yer daddy. I wuz jes' in time ter sna'ch de little fello' en han' him to hiz ma. Dis sot me ter thinkin', ma'be dat spirited hoss ob Marse John's dun run ober yer daddy. Dis nigger coundn't stan' dat idee, no sor-ree. So ez soon ez night drawed nigh I pulled out from ole Joshua en his gang, nebber ter lay dese eyes ob mine on dem ag'in.

"I trabbled, and trabbled, and trabbled. I thought sho' I wuz nebber gwine ter see Marse John no mo'. One

night w'en de sun wuz a sottin' behin' de trees dis nigger walked in dis yer yard nebber ter walk out agin so long ez he live.

"Honeys, I'se ben here ebber since too. Marse John, he don' passed ober de ribber Jordan now, en yer daddy ain't er gwine ter run dis ole nigger no whar, I knows."

—*Virginia Williams.*

THE JUNIORS AT PLAY

A crowd of girls walked innocently down main hall at three forty-five one afternoon and into room 105. There they found a crowd sitting around talking over the happenings of the day and joined in the conversation. In just about two minutes the leader got up and walked slowly out with a wink at her companions. Little did those girls know what was to come but they willingly followed.

Ah! the keen eagle eye of that leader had observed that the windows in 105 were open and she hastily made her way for some string and a paper bag.

Rushing up the stairs to the third floor the girls quickly filled the bag with water and tied it tightly around the top with the string. By this time several girls stood around and gazed with wide-open eyes and mouths, as the "bunch" rushed into the room directly over their victims.

The windows were lined with girls as the little bag slowly swung down inch by inch, until it reached the level of the window below. A wide swing was given, the little bag flew in the window right over the bed full of girls, and broke like a cloud-burst. Among the screams which issued from below came the shrieks of laughter across the court and the fun-makers rushed down to see how well their plan had worked out, finding a very wet and forlorn looking crowd.

—*Elizabeth Ewald.*

TO THE SENIORS

Here's to the Seniors about to depart,
High standards you've set for our class from the start,
May your fame increase with the flying years,
May your hopes be undaunted by doubts or fears.

We will miss your bright faces, your ways so sweet,
And your brilliant record we'll find hard to beat,
But we'll strive as you have, the highest to reach,
And learn from the lessons you've endeavored to teach.

Though there were trials and troublesome hours,
The clouds have lifted and past are the showers,
So we bid you farewell with a sigh and a tear,
And wish you new joy with each passing year.

—*A Junior.*

THE BUTTERCUP LADIES

The sweet little buttercup ladies
Are gaily nodding their heads,
And telling such dear little secrets,
In whispers, from soft, mossy beds.

All day long under the blue sky
They whisper and talk in their glee,
And even if I pass ever so quietly
They stop talking and just nod at me.

And when the night draws her curtain
And from heaven a hundred stars peep,
These shy little buttercup ladies
Say "Good-night," and drop off to sleep.

—*Eva A. Orr.*

EXCHANGES



In examining our exchanges for this month we have given special consideration to the essays. We have found some that show careful thought and that are unusually good. In a few of the magazines, however, we have not found any essays at all. The essay is one of the most important types of literature and it should not be overlooked.

In the March number of *The Student* there is an essay called "The Modern Languages versus the Classics." We have spoken of the advisability of choosing subjects of current interest to the students in writing for our school magazines. This essay would be particularly interesting and helpful to them in making their decision between the two language courses that are generally offered in both high schools and colleges. The advantages of both the classic and the modern languages are discussed and then the two are contrasted. The writer thinks French and German more helpful than Latin and Greek and brings out some strong points in their favor. For instance she says, "It is highly possible for a high school student to learn French and German in four years. It is often the case that the majority of college students never learn to

read Latin and Greek readily." If we do not take this view of the subject ourselves it is well to see both sides of the question. The ending leaves us with a feeling that the essay is not finished. In the last paragraph it would have been better to sum up the advantages and disadvantages of both and end with a clear statement of the writer's decision.

"The Literary Crisis at Randolph-Macon," which appears in the March number of the *Randolph-Macon Monthly*, appeals to us for several reasons. We can sympathize with the staff of the magazine in the crisis they are facing, for our own magazine had been through similar emergencies. Not at Randolph-Macon alone is there lack of interest and support for the college magazine on the part of the student body as a whole.

We are impressed with the unity and coherence of this essay. It is written in a clear, vigorous style that makes its appeal to all. The editor faces the facts bravely and comes to the point at once.

Surely it should make the student body realize its responsibility and cause it to act rapidly.

The University of Virginia Magazine for February contains an essay, called "The Poetry and Promise of Alfred Noyes." Usually we pass hastily over essays on the subject of great men, for usually they simply give us such statements about them as the dates of their births and deaths, which, if we do not already know, we can easily find out by turning to a reference book. This essay, however, is about a living English poet, who, according to the writer, is to take a great place in English literature. Such men are very rarely heard of, and they should be of interest to all.

The writer gives us his own thoughts about the poet and he has evidently made a careful study of his life and writings. We are told about all the different types of his poetry and given quotations from each kind so that we may judge them for ourselves also.

The essay is rather long for a school magazine but if we read it carefully we will find it of interest as well as of educational value. We will be particularly interested in the fact that Mr. Noyes is now in the United States, acting as visiting professor of English Literature at Princeton.

We join the writer of this essay in hoping that "his visit to this country may result in a new and greater inspiration" and "that the next two decades will see upon his shoulders the mantle of Chaucer, and Shakespeare, and Tennyson."

THE FOCUS

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of October, 1912.

J. L. Bugg, Notary Public.

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Editorial

People everywhere realize the disadvantage of having noise around working people. It is found out by experts that much of the nervousness, headaches, and inefficiency of employees in business offices is due to the continuous noises of the office. Because of this, efforts are being made in many ways to shut out and to eliminate useless noises. Offices are being made noise-proof. In German cities useless noises on the street, such as loud whistles, horns, screaming, etc., are prevented by legislation.

No person can accomplish much in any kind of work unless he can concentrate on what he is doing; and it is impossible to concentrate when there are noises of various kinds around to distract the attention. This is just as true of school work as of any other and, if possible, even more so. To get anything out of a class we must keep our minds on the subject. Now, it is often impossible to do this because of the noise on the halls near the class room. Frequently a class is excused before the period is up. These girls rush down the halls laughing and talking "at the top of their voices," entirely unmindful of the many

other girls and the teachers whom they are disturbing. It is often impossible for the girls in class to hear what the teacher is saying or for the teacher to hear the students on account of this noise on the halls.

We call your attention to this because it is not right and should be stopped. Consideration of the rights of others is a great thing and stopping this useless loud laughing and talking on the halls is one of the many ways in which we can show our consideration of our school-mates. We think about this noise very readily when we are disturbed by it, but we fail to realize that we, too, often make unnecessary noises on the halls and disturb others. No doubt many of us have wished at one time or another when in class that the girls would be quiet around our respective class-rooms, but as soon as we get out we create as much disturbance as anyone. If each girl would only stop to think, this noise and disturbance would soon be a thing of the past; for, it is nothing but carelessness or forgetfulness which allows us to make it. Let us, like business offices and the German government, put forth our best efforts to do away with all unnecessary noises. We can do it. Just stop and think! That's what we need to do. We shall soon find out that we can get along just as well without running through the halls, laughing and screaming; and I am sure that everyone will agree that it will be much more pleasant and profitable to attend classes when we are surrounded by quietness the whole period, than when we are continuously interrupted by the loud talking and laughing and other noises from the hall.

Let every girl voluntarily resolve within herself that she *will think* and *will* refrain from making unnecessary noises on the halls.

In following up our editorial of last month, "Good Taste in Reading," we want to suggest some books that each girl ought to read at some time in her life. Of course these books will not appeal to all of the girls now, or possibly not to all of them later on—it is impossible to reach and understand every mind, its previous training, its present

capacity—but the books we suggest here are those which can best help to broaden our outlook on literature and best develop good literary taste. In procuring this material we consulted several members of our Faculty who have suggested books which they consider among the most essential and most broadening works. Among these, Palmer's "Life of Alice Freeman Palmer" was mentioned several times and seems to be an especial favorite.

A study of literature should, of course, be from every viewpoint; the humorous, the serious, the fanciful, the matter-of-fact, and all other forms of literature must be taken up to complete the study. "O. Henry" represents excellently the humorous side, and each girl should read at least enough of "O. Henry" to become acquainted with his interesting style and quaint humor.

The serious side can be treated in many ways; it can be treated from the psychological viewpoint as represented in "Psychology" and "Talks to Teachers on Psychology and Some of Life's Ideals," by William James. The historical is taken up in Scott's "The Heart of Midlothian," Dickens' "Tale of Two Cities," and Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables." Some of the best books among those mentioned were biographies and autobiographies, and these are probably the least read of any form of literature. It seems that we think they will be merely chronological and "prosy," but what can be more interesting and appealing than Palmer's "Life of Alice Freeman Palmer," or Mim's "Life of Sidney Lanier?" The "Life of John Bunyan" was given by one of our Faculty as the most inspiring piece of literature she had ever read, and we can see how this was so when we think of how much John Bunyan had to overwhelm all that was hopeful and inspiring in him, and yet he overcame it all and gave to the world its greatest allegory.

A taste of the fanciful can be had by reading "Stories and Poems," by Henry Van Dyke, and Tennyson's "Idylls of the King." There is wonderful vividness and beauty of expression in Homer's "Iliad" and Dante's "Inferno" and like "Paradise Lost" we cannot help being lifted for

the moment out of our ordinary, everyday life and soaring a little among the clouds.

For thoughtful entertainment we may look to Churchill in his "The Inside of the Cup" or to George Eliot in "Felix Holt."

Following is the list of the books recently put in our Infirmary Library. While they were not all selected for high literary quality they are those which we enjoy most when we are convalescent, and I think we have every reason to be proud of this collection:

Complete works of Robert Louis Stevenson, Molly Make Believe, The White Linen Nurse (Eleanor H. Abbott), Little Women (Louisa M. Alcott), The Kentucky Cardinal (James Lane Allen), The Courage of the Commonplace (Mary R. S. Andrews), The Little Minister, Sentimental Tommy, Tommy and Grizel (J. M. Barrie), Dendry the Audacious (Arnold Bennett), Mary Cary, The House of Happiness (Kate Langley Bosher), The Dawn of Tomorrow (Frances H. Burnett), Alice in Wonderland (Lewis Carroll), The Madness of Philip (Josephine Dodge Daskam), In the Fog (Richard Harding Davis), Rebecca Mary (A. H. Donnell), The Trail of the Lonesome Pine (John Fox, Jr.), The First Violin (Forbergill), Queed, V. V.'s Eyes (Henry Sydnor Harrison), Nancy Stair (Elinor M. Lane), Uncle William (Jeanette Lee), Mr. Pratt (Jos. C. Lincoln), The Lady of the Decoration, The Lady and Sada San, (Frances Little), Burning Daylight (Jack London), The Glory of Clementina (Wm. Locke), The Penny Philanthropist (Clara E. Laughlin), Emmy Lou (George Madden Martin), Mother (Kathleen Norris), Laddie (Gene Stratton Porter), Pollyanna (Eleanor H. Porter), Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch, The Romance of Billygoat Hill (Alice Hegan Rice), Col. Carter of Carterville (F. Hopkinson Smith), The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (Mark Twain), The Woodcarver of Olympus (Mary E. Waller), Daddy Longlegs (Jean Webster), Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, Penelope's Progress, Penelope's Irish Experience, Timothy's Quest, Cathedral Courtship, The Bird's Christmas Carol (Kate Douglas Wiggin), The Day's Work, His Majesty The King, Just So Stories (Rudyard Kipling), Christmas Carol and Other Stories, Vol. containing Dr.

Marigold's Prescription (Chas. Dickens), The Blue Flower and Other Stories (Van Dyke), O. Henry's complete works (12 vols.), Golden Days (Kenneth Graham), Cap'n Eri (Joseph Lincoln), Little Citizens (Myra Kelly), Marjorie Daw and Other Stories (Thomas Bailey Aldrich), Fanciful Tales, The Casting Away of Mrs. Lex and Mrs. Aleshine (Frank Stockton), New England Nun and Other Stories (Mary Wilkins Freeman), Uncle Remus (Joel Chandler Harris), Dr. Grenfell's Parish (Norman Duncan), Down to the Sea (Wilfred T. Grenfell), Old Creole Days (Geo. W. Cable), Old Chester Tales (Margaret Deland), In Ole Virginia (Thomas Nelson Page), Peter Pan (J. M. Barrie), The Piper (Josephine Preston Peabody), The Bluebird (Maurice Maeterlinck), Tragic Comedies (Lady Gregory), With Trumpet and Drums (Eugene Field), Crescent Moon (Rabindranath Tagore), Land of Heart's Desire (Yeats), Mental Efficiency, How to Live on 24 Hours a Day, The Human Machine (Arnold Bennett), My Day (Mrs. Prior), Autobiography (John Muir), Letters (Sidney Lanier), New Creation in Plant Life (W. S. Harwood), Life of Alice Freeman Palmer (Geo. H. Palmer), Life of David Livingston (C. S. Horne), The Promised Land (Mary Antin), The Pardoner's Wallet (Samuel Crothers), The Story of My Life (Helen Keller), The Oxford Book of English Verse, Tremenduous Trifles (G. K. Chesterton), Stories by Foreign Authors (Scribners) 9 vol., Little Masterpieces of Humor (Review of Reviews) sev. vols., Tanglewood Tales (Hawthorne), Keeping up with Lizzie (Irving Bacheller), Wee MacGregor (J. J. Bell), Silas Marner (George Eliot), Prisoner of Zenda (Anthony Hope), Kennedy Square (F. Hopkinson Smith), Major Barbara and Captain Brassbound's Conversion (Bernard Shaw).



The following letter was written by one of the Alumnae of S. N. S. to the head of the English department here. We will print both the letter and the answer as there is a possibility that it may help some other girl who is in the same position:

"Although I know you are very busy I would appreciate it greatly if you would give me a few suggestions about the following matter:

"In addition to the Primary department I have the English and Classics from the High School department. Each member of the graduating class is supposed to write an essay. The writer of the best one receives a ten-dollar gold piece.

"It seems to have been the custom to let them select their own subjects, such as *Ambition* or any like indefinite one, and write about that. Will you tell me a few subjects which would be really of some value? We have a very limited library. Is there any possible material we could get for that purpose? I hate to turn them loose with nothing very definite to help them. The results of that course are also much to be feared.

"I will surely thank you for any help you can give me. I feel very much at sea about it.

"I am glad to make what suggestions I can in regard to the subjects on which members of your graduating class may write their 'essays.'

"I suppose the purpose of requiring such compositions is to give the students an opportunity to do some independent thinking and to put their own ideas into writing. In order to do this you will need first to suggest certain lines of reading and study by following which they may be led to some definite conclusions. These conclusions may be made the subjects of compositions. And since, as you say, you have limited library facilities, I believe you can best make use of current standard magazines for this purpose. Many of your pupils will have good magazines at home which they will be glad to exchange with each other, or they may subscribe for a time to certain magazines which give reduced rates to classes in school, as is indicated by the enclosed "Educational Coupon," for *The Outlook*. Among the weekly magazines which I have found useful in this way are *The Outlook*, *The Independent*, *The Literary Digest*; among the best monthlies for this purpose are *The Review of Reviews*, *Current Opinion*, *The World's Work*, *Forum*, *The North American Review*. For more literary work *The Atlantic Monthly* is good, while *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, and *The Century Magazine* are literary and popular. *McClure's*, *The American*, and *The Cosmopolitan Magazine* are more on the popular order, but they often publish articles which deserve thoughtful study. If your class has access to several such magazines as these, they will find in them many articles bearing on the same topics and giving different points of view, which will well repay careful study. I should suggest that each student select some particular topic or problem in the social, the political, the scientific, the economic field, and read all that he can on the topic. In the course of his reading he will come upon questions that are not yet settled and which he ought to study further. After he has investigated further, and reached conclusions of his own, he will have no difficulty in writing.

"My Fourth Year English Class is divided into six groups, one of which studies current social problems, in education, religion, labor, etc.; another studies economic and business developments; another, politics; and one each for foreign affairs, science and invention, literature

and art. These departments overlap, of course, but each has a distinct point of view and a general field for reading. At present we are in the midst of a series of six weekly debates of which each group has one. Two weeks ago, for instance, the group which is studying politics and government debated the question whether the United States should intervene in Mexico. At another time we had a debate on the enabling act in Virginia. These are the kinds of questions they study and write about. Below I give a list of such topics as may be taken by the members of a class of this sort.

“‘Why the United States Should (or Should Not) Intervene in Mexico.’

“‘A Criticism (or Commendation) of the Policy of Watchful Waiting.’

“‘The Enabling Act a Disastrous Compromise,’ or ‘A Step in the Right Direction.’

“‘The Profit Sharing Plan in Big Business.’

“‘The Recent Revival of English Poetry.’

“(See Current Poetry sections of *Literary Digest* and *Current Opinion*, etc.)

“‘The Influence of Modern Scientific Spirit on Literature.’

“‘The Literature of Woman’s Rights.’

“‘Signs of International Peace.’

“‘Modern Methods of Settling Strikes.’

“Such topics as these are live ones which are treated in current literature and they seem to me to be more important for our young people to understand than the usual topics taken from the study of English classics.

“However, if you have a class in English Literature and would like to make your teaching there function in the direction of these graduating ‘essays,’ you may very well have your students study and write about such topics as ‘What Tennyson (Ruskin, Shakespeare, Milton, Burke, or any other author that you may be studying) Would Have thought of Woman Suffrage,’ Present Conditions in the Balkans, of Mexico, Navigation of the Air, or what not. I believe the study of the classics should be directed in some such way as that suggested above toward helping

our students to solve problems in their own lives or in the conditions under which they are living today.

"Do you know the weekly school newspaper *Current Events*?

"Of course all sorts of subjects may be drawn from the literature studied and worked out entirely within it, such as the use of nature, the religious ideas, or the philosophy suggested in some such great work as *Macbeth*; or the influence of the Bible, of music, science, art, or personal friendships, on the work of a great writer or group of writers. Everything is literally bristling with subjects, for that matter. The difficulty is to get subjects within the reach of your own particular students. As I do not know just what work you are teaching it is hard to make definite suggestions; but I hope that among these many hints you can find something that you can work out with your class. It is usually best, I believe, to suggest and explain a number of subjects and allow you pupils to select the ones which appeal to them most. If I have not helped you, please let me know and I shall try again.

"I hope you find your work enjoyable and satisfying.

Alma Carver, of the January class 1914, is teaching at Norton, Va.

‡‡	Hit or Miss	‡‡
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Dr. Milledge—Give some idea of the size of the ice that covered North America during the Ice Age.

Bright Junior—It weighed two thousand pounds and was ten feet long and twenty feet wide.

C-a-r N-e—Is your cousin at the University of Pennsylvania?

A-n-e B-a-g—Yes, he is at the Theological Cemetery up there.

Mrs. B-r-y—Elizabeth, have you any sisters?

Elizabeth—No, my brothers are all boys.

First Girl—Oh, I got a cerese hat, trimmed in maline, today.

Second Girl—What color is maline?

When an old colored brother was called upon to say a few words at the funeral of another brother, he said, "Well, Brother Ben, we knows you done gone from us, but we hopes you ain't gone where we 'spect you done gone."

The following was handed in to us and though it seems to need different punctuation, no one feels capable of correcting it:

Mr. Coyner, showing a geography, "This old book was published in 1892. It has been handed down to me; through three or four generations I studied it."

Mr. Eason, telling the Seniors some of the hardships of a teacher's life, "You will have that to contend with just as sure as two and two make one."

Miss Smithey (teaching French)—Alice, what is nothing?

Alice—Nothing.

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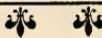
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